NEWS

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

AVERAGE ANNUAL PAY FOR THE SOUTHEAST--1999

Annual pay for Southeastern[1] states averaged $29,119 in 1999, according to the U. S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). Janet S. Rankin, regional commissioner for BLS in Atlanta, noted that pay in the region was lower than the nationwide average of $33,340. Overall, regional pay increased by 3.7 percent from 1998, less than the 4.4 percent gain for the United States.

Pay levels in all southeastern states were lower than the national average ranging from $32,332 in Georgia to $24,391 in Mississippi. The rate of pay growth in two southeastern states, however, did exceed the national increase in 1999. Over the year, pay grew at a 4.8 percent pace in Georgia, the seventh highest increase in the nation, and by 4.6 percent in North Carolina, also a top ten ranking. In contrast, Mississippi's pay level grew at a rate of 2.4 percent, slowest in the region and among the lowest in the country. Florida was the only other state in the region with pay growth below 3.0 percent. (See Table 1.)

Pay differences among states reflect the varying composition of employment by occupation, industry, and hours of work, as well as other factors. Similarly, over-the-year pay changes may reflect shifts in characteristics, as well as changes in the level of average pay. Annual pay data are compiled from reports submitted by employers subject to state and federal Unemployment Insurance (UI) laws which cover 122 million full- and part-time workers nationwide. Average annual pay is computed by dividing total annual payrolls of employees covered by UI programs by the average monthly number of those employees. (See Technical Note.)

Pay in industries

Similar to the national trend, mining had the highest industry pay in six of the eight states in the Southeast, with Alabama's level exceeding all others in the region at $48,877. Nationally, the mining industry averaged $54,636. In the remaining two states, Georgia's wholesale trade industry led all others in the State averaging $48,439, and in North Carolina, finance, insurance, and real estate had the highest industry pay level at $44,051. Throughout the region, retail trade remained the industry with the lowest average annual pay, reflecting its relatively large share of part-time workers. Retail trade workers in Mississippi had the lowest pay level among the Southeastern states averaging $14,501 in 1999, while those in Tennessee, Georgia, and Florida made close to the national average of $17,602. (See Table 3.)

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[1] The Southeast includes the states of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

Pay in metropolitan areas

Among the region's 69 metropolitan areas, Atlanta, Georgia had the highest average annual pay at $37,323. Atlanta was the only metropolitan area within the Southeast in 1999 with pay above the $34,900 average for the nation's 316 metropolitan areas. Annual pay in Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina was essentially the same as the national metropolitan average and the second highest in the Southeast. (See Table 2.) Jacksonville, North Carolina and Myrtle Beach, South Carolina remained the metropolitan areas with the lowest pay in the region at $20,278 and $21,701, respectively. Jacksonville's pay level was also the lowest among all metropolitan areas in the United States and Myrtle Beach's was fifth.

Most metropolitan areas in the region experienced pay growth less than the 4.4 percent average increase for all metropolitan areas in the United States. Nationally, the same trend occurred, as approximately three-quarters of the metropolitan areas had increases below the nationwide average. Two metropolitan areas in the Southeast had virtually no pay growth in 1999, Biloxi-Gulfport-Pascagoula, Mississippi (0.1 percent) and Jacksonville, Florida (0.3 percent), and five others had growth of around 1.0 percent. No area, however, reported a decline in average annual pay. Among the 14 areas in the region with pay growth that equaled or exceeded the metropolitan area average, Raleigh-Durham and Wilmington, both in North Carolina, led the Southeast with pay gains of 6.1 percent and 5.4 percent, respectively. Atlanta ranked third in pay growth at 5.3 percent, followed by Florence and Tuscaloosa, Alabama, each with increases of 5.1 percent in 1999. (See Table 2.)

NOTE

Data presented in this release will differ from that previously published in the three Annual Average Pay releases issued in November and December 2000. Data for New Jersey, which was unavailable at the time the national releases were issued, is now included.

TECHNICAL NOTE

These data are the product of a federal-state cooperative program in which State Employment Security Agencies (SESAs) prepare summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by Unemployment Insurance legislation. The summaries are a by-product of the administration of state unemployment insurance (UI) programs that require most employers to pay quarterly taxes based on the employment and wages of workers covered by UI. Data for 1999 are preliminary and subject to revision.

Coverage

Employment and wage data for workers covered by state UI laws and for federal civilian workers covered by the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) program are compiled from quarterly contribution reports submitted to the SESAs by employers. In addition to the quarterly contribution reports, employers who operate multiple establishments within a state complete a questionnaire, called the "Multiple Worksite Report," which provides detailed information on the location and industry of each of their establishments. Average annual pay data are derived from summaries of employment and wages submitted by states to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. These reports are based on place of employment rather than place of residence.

UI and UCFE coverage is broad and basically comparable from state to state. In 1999, UI and UCFE programs covered workers in 127.0 million jobs. The estimated 122 million workers in these jobs (after adjustment for multiple jobholders) represented 99.0 percent of wage and salary civilian employment. Multiple jobholder estimates are produced by the Current Population Survey (CPS). Covered workers received $4.232 trillion in pay, representing 94.7 percent of the wage and salary component of personal income and 45.5 percent of the gross domestic product.

Major exclusions from UI coverage during 1999 are most agricultural workers on small farms, all members of the Armed Forces, elected officials in most states, most employees of railroads, some domestic workers, most student workers at schools, and employees of certain small nonprofit organizations.

Concepts and methodology

Average annual pay was computed by dividing total annual pay of employees covered by UI programs by the average monthly number of these employees. Included in the annual payroll data are bonuses, the cash value of meals and lodging when supplied, tips and other gratuities, and, in some states, employer contributions to certain deferred compensation plans such as 401(k) plans, and stock options. Monthly employment is based on the number of workers who worked during or received pay for the pay period including the 12th of the month. With few exceptions, all employees of covered firms are reported, including production and sales workers, corporation officials, executives, supervisory personnel, and clerical workers. Workers on paid vacations and part-time workers also are included. Percent changes in average annual pay were computed using final 1998 data as the base. These final 1998 data may differ from the preliminary 1998 data previously published.

Average annual pay is affected by the ratio of full-time to part-time workers, as well as the number of individuals in high-paying and low-paying occupations. When comparing average annual pay levels between industries and/or states, these factors should be taken into consideration. Annual pay data only approximate annual earnings because an individual may not be employed by the same employer all year or may work for more than one employer. Also, year-to-year changes in average annual pay can result from a change in the proportion of employment in high- and low-wage jobs, as well as from changes in the level of average annual pay.

In order to insure the highest possible quality of data, SESAs verify with employers and update, if necessary, the industry, location, and ownership classification of all establishments on a 3-year cycle. Changes in establishment classification codes resulting from the verification process are introduced with the data reported for the first quarter of the year. Changes resulting from improved employer reporting also are introduced in the first quarter. For these reasons, some data, especially at more detailed industry levels, may not be strictly comparable with earlier years.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) defines metropolitan areas for use in federal statistical activities and updates these definitions as needed each summer. Data in this release use metropolitan area criteria established by OMB in definitions issued June 23, 1998 (OMB Bulletin No. 98- 06). The 316 metropolitan areas in the United States, along with six in Puerto Rico, are a compilation of a set of areas classified as Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), Primary Metropolitan Statistical Areas (PMSAs) and Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Areas (CMSAs). Generally speaking, a MSA consists of one or more counties and meets specified size criteria - either it contains a city of at least 50,000 inhabitants, or it includes an urbanized area (of at least 50,000 population) and has a total metropolitan population of at least 100,000 (75,000 in New England). A CMSA is a metropolitan area that has a population of at least 1 million and has been divided into two or more

PMSAs. The CMSA comprises the same geographic area as its constituent PMSAs which are loosely defined as free-standing areas that have a population of at least 100,000.

Additional statistics and other information

Additional average annual pay data (or Covered Employment and Wages data) is available on the BLS internet site at http://www.bls.gov/cewhome.htm. Data can be accessed in two ways, through Selective Access, which allows quick access to particular items, or via the special request FTP service, which allows access to extensive collection of flat text files. The Atlanta Information Office can provide assistance accessing these files by calling (404) 331-3415.

This news release, along with other BLS statistics and information, is available via the internet at http://www.bls.gov/ro4news.htm.

BLS issues an annual report that provides data from state UI and UCFE programs. The comprehensive bulletin, Employment and Wages, Annual Averages, 1999, features information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and individually for each state. The report will be available for sale in early 2001 from the BLS Publications Sales Center, P.O. Box 2145, Chicago, Illinois 60690.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; TDD message referral phone number: 1-800-877-8339. For personal assistance or further information on annual average pay data as well as other Bureau programs, contact the Atlanta Information Office at (404) 331-3415 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. eastern time.

Table 1. Average annual pay in the Southeast states for 1998 and 1999 and percent change in pay for all covered workers 1/

State	Annual average pay		
	1998	1999	Percent Change 1998-99
United States	$31,945	$33,340	4.4
Southeast	28,073	29,119	3.7
Alabama	27,042	28,095	3.9
Florida	28,184	28,935	2.7
Georgia	30,856	32,332	4.8
Kentucky	26,697	27,783	4.1
Mississippi	23,822	24,391	2.4
North Carolina	28,176	29,462	4.6
South Carolina	26,161	27,132	3.7
Tennessee	28,462	29,478	3.6

1/ Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. State and industry average annual pay in Southeast states for 1998 and 1999, and percent change
in pay for private industry workers

| State and Industry | Annual average pay | | Percent Change 1998-99 |
	1998	1999	
United States (1)			
Private (2)			
Total	$31,762	$33,244	4.7
Mining	52,066	54,636	4.9
Construction	33,386	34,812	4.3
Manufacturing	40,092	41,941	4.6
Transportation, communications, and			
public utilities	39,345	41,786	6.2
Wholesale trade	41,831	44,185	5.6
Retail trade	16,810	17,602	4.7
Finance, insurance, and real estate	48,641	50,910	4.7
Services	30,053	31,509	4.8
Alabama			
Private (2)			
Total	26,507	27,567	4.0
Mining	47,640	48,877	2.6
Construction	26,797	28,203	5.2
Manufacturing	31,302	32,628	4.2
Transportation, communications, and			
public utilities	36,092	37,093	2.8
Wholesale trade	34,067	36,252	6.4
Retail trade	14,750	15,280	3.6
Finance, insurance, and real estate	34,661	36,387	5.0
Services	26,056	27,130	4.1
Florida			
Private (2)			
Total	27,629	28,390	2.8
Mining	41,042	41,807	1.9
Construction	28,992	29,938	3.3
Manufacturing	35,404	36,217	2.3
Transportation, communications, and			
public utilities	35,204	37,067	5.3
Wholesale trade	38,799	40,995	5.7
Retail trade	17,189	17,807	3.6
Finance, insurance, and real estate	40,687	40,666	-0.1
Services	27,201	27,705	1.9

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. State and industry average annual pay in Southeast states for 1998 and 1999, and percent change in pay for all covered workers (Continued)

State and Industry	Annual average pay		
	1998	1999	Percent Change 1998-99
Georgia			
Private (2)			
Total	$31,121	$32,696	5.1
Mining	43,253	45,034	4.1
Construction	30,657	32,415	5.7
Manufacturing	34,138	35,563	4.2
Transportation, communications, and			
public utilities	43,810	46,552	6.3
Wholesale trade	45,402	48,439	6.7
Retail trade	16,550	17,426	5.3
Finance, insurance, and real estate	45,362	46,809	3.2
Services	30,176	31,797	5.4
Kentucky			
Private (2)			
Total	26,608	27,691	4.1
Mining	42,050	41,796	-0.6
Construction	28,200	29,746	5.5
Manufacturing	34,655	36,381	5.0
Transportation, communications, and			
public utilities	35,697	37,529	5.1
Wholesale trade	33,909	35,810	5.6
Retail trade	14,666	15,299	4.3
Finance, insurance, and real estate	33,898	34,519	1.8
Services	24,036	24,985	3.9
Mississippi			
Private (2)			
Total	23,553	24,079	2.2
Mining	36,794	40,168	9.2
Construction	26,575	26,966	1.5
Manufacturing	26,721	27,642	3.4
Transportation, communications, and			
public utilities	32,962	33,434	1.4
Wholesale trade	31,465	32,531	3.4
Retail trade	14,002	14,501	3.6
Finance, insurance, and real estate	30,163	30,616	1.5
Services	22,784	23,236	2.0

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. State and industry average annual pay in Southeast states for 1998 and 1999, and percent change in pay for private industry workers (Continued)

State and Industry	Annual average pay		
	1998	1999	Percent Change 1998-99
North Carolina			
Private (2)			
Total	$28,031	$29,375	4.8
Mining	41,663	43,968	5.5
Construction	28,272	29,313	3.7
Manufacturing	32,744	34,595	5.7
Transportation, communications, and public utilities	37,971	39,456	3.9
Wholesale trade	37,868	39,145	3.4
Retail trade	15,975	16,798	5.2
Finance, insurance, and real estate	41,681	44,051	5.7
Services	26,236	27,695	5.6
South Carolina			
Private (2)			
Total	25,830	26,750	3.6
Mining	37,762	37,780	0.0
Construction	27,639	28,358	2.6
Manufacturing	33,116	33,944	2.5
Transportation, communications, and public utilities	33,425	37,343	11.7
Wholesale trade	34,487	35,955	4.3
Retail trade	15,089	15,895	5.3
Finance, insurance, and real estate	32,584	33,971	4.3
Services	24,015	24,561	2.3
Tennessee			
Private (2)			
Total	28,376	29,458	3.8
Mining	46,584	44,005	-5.5
Construction	30,443	32,072	5.4
Manufacturing	33,316	34,763	4.3
Transportation, communications, and public utilities	35,057	36,698	4.7
Wholesale trade	36,983	39,559	7.0
Retail trade	16,594	17,377	4.7
Finance, insurance, and real estate	39,362	39,647	0.7
Services	27,109	27,767	2.4

1/ Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico.
2/ Includes data for industries in addition to those shown separately.

Table 3. Average annual pay for 1998 and 1999 for all covered workers (1) by metropolitan areas in the Southeast

Metropolitan area	Annual average pay		
	1998	1999	Percent Change 1998-99
All metropolitan areas	$33,423	$34,900	4.4
Biloxi-Gulfport-Pascagoula, MS	$26,328	$26,347	0.1
Jacksonville, FL	29,954	30,037	0.3
Punta Gorda, FL	23,144	23,370	1.0
Gainesville, FL	24,923	25,180	1.0
Huntsville, AL	33,789	34,177	1.1
Pensacola, FL	24,886	25,181	1.2
Gadsden, AL	24,476	24,777	1.2
Fort Walton Beach, FL	23,492	23,836	1.5
Melbourne-Titusville-Palm Bay, FL	29,492	29,955	1.6
Panama City, FL	23,916	24,298	1.6
Johnson City-Kingsport-Bristol, TN-VA	25,667	26,132	1.8
Fort Pierce-Port St. Lucie, FL	25,557	26,023	1.8
Huntington-Ashland, WV-KY-OH	25,112	25,581	1.9
Augusta-Aiken, GA-SC	28,008	28,595	2.1
Albany, GA	26,173	26,740	2.2
Dothan, AL	25,361	25,943	2.3
Jacksonville, NC	19,818	20,278	2.3
Macon, GA	27,696	28,347	2.4
Ocala, FL	23,591	24,156	2.4
Tallahassee, FL	26,921	27,569	2.4
Fayetteville, NC	24,491	25,123	2.6
Evansville-Henderson, IN-KY	28,418	29,168	2.6
Sumter, SC	22,206	22,807	2.7
Lakeland-Winter Haven, FL	26,188	26,928	2.8
Mobile, AL	25,843	26,584	2.9
Clarksville-Hopkinsvillle,TN-KY	23,065	23,744	2.9
West Palm Beach-Boca Raton, FL	31,877	32,824	3.0
Goldsboro, NC	23,116	23,812	3.0
Asheville, NC	25,742	26,537	3.1
Anniston, AL	23,851	24,593	3.1
Hattiesburg, MS	22,882	23,596	3.1
Knoxville, TN	27,678	28,598	3.3
Orlando, FL	27,791	28,719	3.3
Nashville, TN	30,703	31,729	3.3
Savannah, GA	27,744	28,692	3.4
Chattanooga, TN-GA	27,328	28,269	3.4
Daytona Beach, FL	22,858	23,650	3.5
Athens, GA	25,777	26,712	3.6
Memphis, TN-AR-MS	31,287	32,426	3.6
Jackson, MS	27,086	28,073	3.6
Jackson, TN	26,786	27,788	3.7
Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson, SC	27,658	28,696	3.8

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 3. Average annual pay for 1998 and 1999 for all covered workers (1) by metropolitan areas in the Southeast (Continued)

Metropolitan area	Annual average pay		
	1998	**1999**	**Percent Change 1998-99**
Lexington, KY	$28,176	$29,257	3.8
Miami, FL	30,867	32,067	3.9
Sarasota-Bradenton, FL	25,216	26,204	3.9
Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, FL	28,251	29,361	3.9
Greensboro-Winston Salem-High Point, NC	28,613	29,746	4.0
Fort Lauderdale, FL	30,006	31,208	4.0
Hickory-Morganton-Lenoir, NC	24,932	25,931	4.0
Owensboro, KY	24,107	25,084	4.1
Rocky Mount, NC	25,714	26,788	4.2
Greenville, NC	25,447	26,520	4.2
Florence, SC	25,273	26,358	4.3
Columbia, SC	26,781	27,934	4.3
Columbus, GA-AL	25,050	26,134	4.3
Charlotte-Gastonia-Rock Hill, NC-SC	32,912	34,374	4.4
Decatur, AL	27,698	28,931	4.5
Montgomery, AL	26,165	27,339	4.5
Myrtle Beach, SC	20,762	21,701	4.5
Charleston-North Charleston, SC	25,243	26,389	4.5
Naples, FL	26,802	28,021	4.5
Fort Myers-Cape Coral, FL	25,300	26,458	4.6
Birmingham, AL	30,612	32,094	4.8
Louisville, KY-IN	29,171	30,609	4.9
Tuscaloosa, AL	27,001	28,367	5.1
Florence, AL	23,618	24,821	5.1
Atlanta, GA	35,434	37,323	5.3
Wilmington, NC	25,623	27,011	5.4
Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, NC	32,824	34,823	6.1

1/ Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.